

For Immediate Release

The Kitchen to present composer-pianist Nico Muhly March 7 and 8

Muhly's first engagement at the venue is a new work commissioned by the Kitchen, featuring artist and fashion designer Shoplifter

New York, NY, February 13, 2008—With compositions that have been performed at some of the world's most prestigious venues, a critically lauded first album, and collaborations with artists ranging from Philip Glass to Björk and Antony, **Nico Muhly** is, at 26, being acknowledged as one of the most exciting composers and pianists of his generation. **The Kitchen** has commissioned a new work from the artist, in which he collaborates with the Icelandic artist and fashion designer **Shoplifter (a.k.a. Hrafnhildur Arnardottir)**. Muhly will premiere the work on **Friday, March 7** and **Saturday, March 8**, performing with the accompaniment of Sam Amidon (banjo and voice), Nadia Sirota (viola) and Sam Solomon (percussion). Performances will take place at **8:00 P.M.** at The Kitchen (512 West 19th Street). Tickets are \$10.

The work Muhly will perform at the Kitchen comprises three new chamber music pieces, each with a different *tableaux vivant* designed for it by Shoplifter. Each of Muhly's pieces represents one of three bodily elements: bone, skin and hair. The last of these has been the focus of Shoplifter's recent sculptures and wall murals (as well as her first collaboration with Björk: the human hair sculpture on the cover of her 2004 album, *Medúlla*). Each of Muhly's pieces will also prominently feature one of the three costumed musicians performing with him. The culmination of the evening will be a performance of Muhly's *The Only Tune*, a retelling of the old folk tale *The Two Sisters*, a chilling murder ballad in which a young girl's body is butchered and turned into a fiddle.

Muhly's intricately textured compositions draw on experimental new music traditions, electronic pop and amateur religious theater. They have been performed at Avery Fisher Hall, the Royal Academy of Music in London, the Whitney Museum of American Art and the New York Public Library on 42nd Street, where his song cycle based on Strunk and White's grammar manual *The Elements of Style* was performed to much acclaim in 2005. Muhly frequently collaborates with Philip Glass and recently conducted excerpts from *Einstein on the Beach* for a new ballet by Benjamin Millepied at the Opéra de Paris. In October 2007, the American Ballet Theater will premiere Muhly and Millepied's collaboration *From Here On Out*. Muhly has also lent his skills as performer, arranger and conductor to Björk, Bonnie "Prince" Billy, and Antony Hegarty of Antony and the Johnsons. In February 2007, Muhly and Antony worked together on a new Shakespeare setting for *The Sonnet Project*, a program curated by Gavin Bryars for Opera North and the Royal Shakespeare Company. Muhly collaborated with the Icelandic musician Valgeir Sigurðsson on his solo debut *Ekvilíbríum* (2007), released on Sigurðsson's Bedroom Community Records, a label inaugurated by the release of Muhly's first album, *Speaks Volumes* (2007). Muhly has presented concerts of his chamber music at Carnegie Hall and the Whitney Museum. Forthcoming orchestral projects include a work for the Chicago Symphony MusicNOW program. Muhly is also working on his second solo album, *Mothertongue*.

Shoplifter (a.k.a. Hrafnhildur Arnardottir) was born in Reykjavik, Iceland and currently lives and works in New York. Underlying Shoplifter's work is an obsession with vanity, self-image, beauty, fashion and fetish. She explores these themes through a variety of mediums including installation, sculpture, photography,

drawings, paintings and performance. Recent projects include an ongoing collaboration with the singer Björk; an eighty-foot wall-mural and a wall-sculpture commissioned by Nike for a 2006 exhibition in New York; *Siamese Rapunzels: The longest live human hair braid in the world* created for Deitch Art Parade in 2007; and solo shows in Reykjavik, Iceland. Arnardottir's upcoming shows include a solo exhibition at i8 Gallery, Reykjavik, Iceland; a collaboration with Eli Sudbrack of a.v.a.f. at Deitch Projects; and various other shows in Canada, the U.S. and Iceland. In 2006, The Lower Manhattan Cultural Council included Arnardottir in their 9-month studio program and in 2008's Swingspace program to support her project with Muhly at The Kitchen. Arnardottir is also a recipient of the Visual Artists' Stipend Fund, financed by the Icelandic government.

In 2001, at age 19, **Sam Amidon** released his first solo album, *Solo Fiddle*, a collection of twelve traditional Irish fiddle pieces performed unadorned and without a backing instrument. Amidon has performed with The Amidons since a young age, plays fiddle in the avant-folk group Assembly, and plays banjo in the indie rock band Doveman. In 2004 he starred in Maureen Foley's film *American Wake*, for which Assembly and Seamus Egan provided music.

New York-based violist **Nadia Sirota** has commissioned and premiered dozens of works by composers and songwriters including Marcos Balter, Ben Frost, Judd Greenstein, Nico Muhly, Valgeir Sigurðsson, and Ryan Streber. At the Juilliard School, she performed as co-founder of the AXIOM ensemble, initiated the Castleman/Amory/Huang studio's New Music Project, and created the Juilliard Plays Juilliard program for student composers and performers. In 2005, Sirota performed Hindemith's *Der Schwanendreher* with conductor Marin Alsop and the Juilliard Orchestra in Alice Tully Hall. She has also collaborated as soloist and chamber musician with such artists as Joseph Kalichstein, Itzhak Perlman, and the Silk Road Ensemble. She is currently a member of the Tetras String Quartet, the American Contemporary Music Ensemble (ACME), and the collaborative multimedia group Vision Into Art (VIA), and was a founding fellow of the Academy, a program of Carnegie Hall, the Juilliard School, and The Weill Music Institute. Sirota's recording credits include work for MTV2, Neuma, Bedroom Community, the Royal Academy of Music and 11:11 Records. In the spring of 2008, she will make her solo recording debut with an album on the newly-minted New Amsterdam label, interpreting music by Judd Greenstein, Nico Muhly and Moondog.

Percussionist **Samuel Z. Solomon** has been responsible for dozens of world premieres of solo and small ensemble works and has been involved in numerous additional projects to perpetuate the music of young composers. He is author of the critically acclaimed *How to Write for PERCUSSION*, a comprehensive guide for composers on percussion composition. In December 1999, Solomon was featured in Lincoln Center's Alice Tully Hall, performing the American premiere of Iannis Xenakis' *O-Mega* for percussion solo and chamber orchestra with the New Juilliard Ensemble. In February of 2000, he made his Carnegie Hall debut performing the world premiere of John Mackey's *Concerto for Percussion and Orchestra* as a guest soloist with the New York Youth Symphony. Solomon is also a founding member of the Line C3 percussion group, a member of White Rabbit, a contemporary music ensemble in residence at Harvard University, and timpanist of the Amici New York chamber orchestra in residence each summer at the OKMozart festival in Bartlesville, OK. He currently teaches percussion at The Boston Conservatory and Boston University and is the President of the Massachusetts Chapter of the Percussive Arts Society.

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ABOUT THE KITCHEN

The Kitchen is one of New York City's oldest nonprofit performance and exhibition spaces, showing experimental work by innovative artists, both emerging and established. Programs range from dance, music, and theatrical performances to video and media arts exhibitions to literary events, film screenings, and artists' talks. Since its inception in 1971, The Kitchen has been a powerful force in shaping the cultural landscape of this country and has helped launch the careers of many artists who have gone on to worldwide prominence.

Box Office Information:
212.255.5793 ext. 11
Tue-Sat, 2-6pm

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